

REMARKS

Claims 1-23, 27-30, and 34-38 are currently pending in the application. Claims 1, 7, 10, 20, 22, and 34-36 have been amended. Claims 39-42 have been canceled. Claims 24-26 and 31-33 have been withdrawn from consideration. Applicant respectfully submits that no new matter has been added. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

The drawings stand objected to as failing to comply with 37 C.F.R. 1.84(p)(5) because they include reference numeral 52 not mentioned in the specification. In response, Applicant has amended the specification on page 14, line 2 to include reference numeral 52. Applicant respectfully submits that reference numeral 52 relates to semi-circular protuberances as disclosed in the originally filed specification. Applicant respectfully submits that no new matter has been added by the amendment to the specification.

The drawings have further been objected to under 37 C.F.R. 1.83(a) for not showing every feature of the invention specified in the claims. The Office Action asserts that the claimed feature of an interior region having ribs along a first and second wall and a plurality of bumps and ridges along a surface of the first and second walls must be shown. Applicant respectfully submits that these features are disclosed in Figures 4-5 and in the specification on Page 11, lines 12-15. Applicant respectfully submits that the objection to the drawings be withdrawn.

The specification stands objected to as failing to provide proper antecedent basis for the claimed subject matter. More specifically, claims 21-23 have insufficient antecedent basis. The Office Action asserts that the specification does not include the term "ridges". Applicant respectfully submits that the term "ridges" is present on page 11, line 14 of the originally filed specification.

Claims 1-4, 6-9, 13-14, 18-19, 27, and 42 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 1,990,553 to Koffler et al. ("Koffler"). Koffler discloses a protective mitt adapted to be worn on a user's hand to protect a palm and ends of the user's thumb and fingers. The mitt includes a large pocket, a small pocket, and a connecting member.

The connecting portion assumes a bent and is substantially U shaped to extend across the palm of the user's hand.

Independent claim 1 is directed to a hand protector and grip enhancer. Applicant respectfully submits that Koffler fails to teach, suggest, or anticipate at least one of the distinguishing features of independent claim 1. Koffler discloses a protective mitt adapted to be worn on a user's hand to protect the user's palm, thumb and fingers. However, Koffler fails to disclose an interior region including a plurality of ribs that bridge across a hinge region and extend generally perpendicularly from the hinge region towards a first end and a second end of a C-shaped body as claimed. Applicant respectfully submits that amended claim 1 distinguishes over Koffler and is in condition for allowance. Withdrawal of the rejection of amended claim 1 as anticipated by Koffler is respectfully requested.

Dependent claim 42 has been canceled, thus rendering the rejection of claim 42 moot. Dependent claims 2-4, 6-9, 13-14, 18-19, and 27 depend from and further restrict independent claim 1 in a patentable sense. Applicant respectfully submits that, for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to the rejection of independent claim 1, dependent claims 2-4, 6-9, 13-14, 18-19, and 27 distinguish over Koffler and are in condition for allowance. Withdrawal of the rejection of dependent claims 2-4, 6-9, 13-14, 18-19, and 27 is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 7, 12, and 15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 580,148 to Staples ("Staples"). Staples discloses a holder which is adapted to maintain itself in proper general position to be placed around handles of appliances such as, for example, flat-irons, tea-pots and the like. The holder is composed of a non-heat conducting material and also includes pockets or guards for receiving fingers and thumb of a user's hand.

Independent claim 1 is directed to a hand protector and grip enhancer. Applicant respectfully submits that Staples fails to teach, suggest, or anticipate at least one of the distinguishing features of independent claim 1. Staples discloses a holder which is adapted to be placed around handles of appliances such as, for example, flat-irons, tea-pots and the like. However, Staples fails to disclose an interior region including a plurality of ribs that bridge across a hinge region and extend generally perpendicularly from the hinge region towards a first end and a second end of a C-shaped body as claimed. Applicant respectfully submits that

amended claim 1 distinguishes over Staples and is in condition for allowance. Withdrawal of the rejection of amended claim 1 as anticipated by Staples is respectfully requested.

Dependent claims 7, 12, and 15 depend from and further restrict independent claim 1 in a patentable sense. Applicant respectfully submits that, for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to the rejection of independent claim 1, dependent claims 7, 12, and 15 distinguish over Staples and are in condition for allowance. Withdrawal of the rejection of dependent claims 7, 12, and 15 is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 7, 11, 16, 28, and 34 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 1,416,001 to Detwiler ("Detwiler"). Detwiler discloses a thumb and finger protector adapted for use by an operator of a power driven wringer to prevent the thumb and fingers of the operator from being crushed or otherwise injured by rollers or other operating parts of the wringer mechanism.

Independent claims 1 and 34 are directed to a hand protector and grip enhancer. Applicant respectfully submits that Detwiler fails to teach, suggest, or anticipate at least one of the distinguishing features of independent claims 1 and 34. Detwiler discloses a finger receptacle and a thumb receptacle formed of an insulating material. However, Detwiler fails to disclose an interior region including a plurality of ribs that bridge across a hinge region and extend generally perpendicularly from the hinge region towards a first end and a second end of a C-shaped body as claimed. Applicant respectfully submits that amended claims 1 and 34 distinguish over Detwiler and are in condition for allowance. Withdrawal of the rejection of amended claims 1 and 34 as anticipated by Detwiler is respectfully requested.

Dependent claims 7, 11, 16, and 28 depend from and further restrict independent claim 1 in a patentable sense. Applicant respectfully submits that, for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to the rejection of independent claim 1, dependent claims 7, 11, 16, and 28 distinguish over Detwiler and are in condition for allowance. Withdrawal of the rejection of dependent claims 7, 11, 16, and 28 is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 1,955,989 to Uhri ("Uhri"). Uhri discloses a holder for protecting a user's fingers from detergents. The holder consists of a flexible strip such as a sheet of rubber having

elongated rubber elements of semicircular cross section applied to one face thereof and forming therewith pockets for receiving only end portions of a thumb and one or more fingers of a user's hand.

Independent claim 1 is directed to a hand protector and grip enhancer. Applicant respectfully submits that Uhri fails to teach, suggest, or anticipate at least one of the distinguishing features of independent claim 1. Uhri discloses a holder for protecting a user's fingers from detergent. Uhri further discloses pebbled or roughened surface of a flexible strip. However, Uhri fails to disclose an interior region including a plurality of ribs that bridge across a hinge region and extend generally perpendicularly from the hinge region towards a first end and a second end of a C-shaped body as claimed. Applicant respectfully submits that amended claim 1 distinguishes over Uhri and is in condition for allowance. Withdrawal of the rejection of amended claim 1 as anticipated by Uhri is respectfully requested.

Dependent claim 17 depends from and further restricts independent claim 1 in a patentable sense. Applicant respectfully submits that, for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to the rejection of independent claim 1, dependent claim 17 distinguishes over Uhri and is in condition for allowance. Withdrawal of the rejection of dependent claim 17 is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 29-30, and 35 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,188,055 to Green ("Green"). Green discloses a disposable manual finger shielding bilateral shovel tongs for sanitary removal and disposal of obnoxious matter such as animal excrement or litter. The shovel tongs are in the form of a self interlocking unitary firm structural planar member of locally linearly foldable and stiffly bendable resilient disposable material.

Independent claims 1 and 35 are directed to a hand protector and grip enhancer. Applicant respectfully submits that Green fails to teach, suggest, or anticipate at least one of the distinguishing features of independent claims 1 and 35. Green discloses a shovel tong having finger insertion shielding external pockets. However, Green fails to disclose an interior region including a plurality of ribs that bridge across a hinge region and extend generally perpendicularly from the hinge region towards a first end and a second end of a C-shaped body

as claimed. Applicant respectfully submits that amended claims 1 and 35 distinguish over Green and are in condition for allowance. Withdrawal of the rejection of amended claims 1 and 35 as anticipated by Green is respectfully requested.

Dependent claims 29-30 depend from and further restrict independent claim 1 in a patentable sense. Applicant respectfully submits that, for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to the rejection of independent claim 1, dependent claims 29-30 distinguish over Green and are in condition for allowance. Withdrawal of the rejection of dependent claims 29-30 is respectfully requested.

Claim 5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Koffler in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,532,597 to Bignon et al. ("Bignon").

Dependent claim 5 depends from and further restricts independent claim 1 in a patentable sense. Applicant respectfully submits that, for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to the rejection of independent claim 1, dependent claim 5 distinguishes over the combination of Koffler and Bignon and is in condition for allowance. Withdrawal of the rejection of dependent claim 5 is respectfully requested.

Claims 10, 20, and 36 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Koffler in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,682,803 to Andrews ("Andrews").

Dependent claims 10, 20, and 36 depend from and further restrict independent claim 1 in a patentable sense. Applicant respectfully submits that, for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to the rejection of independent claim 1, dependent claims 10, 20, and 36 distinguish over the cited combination of Koffler and Andrews and are in condition for allowance. Withdrawal of the rejection of dependent claims 10, 20, and 36 is respectfully requested.

In addition, Applicant respectfully submits that the cited combination of Koffler and Andrews fails to teach, suggest, or obviate at least one of the distinguishing features of independent claim 1 from which claims 10, 20, and 36 depend from. More specifically, Koffler disclose discloses a protective mitt adapted to be worn on a user's hand to protect the user's palm, thumb and fingers. Koffler fails to disclose an interior region including a plurality of ribs

that bridge across a hinge region and extend generally perpendicularly from the hinge region towards a first end and a second end of a C-shaped body. Andrews discloses a hand-held pincer like device for providing a secure grip upon a fish. The device comprises substantially identical rigid panels which are hingedly connected to one another to permit facile opening and secure closing, and which have friction-enhancing interior surfaces thereon. Andrews discloses a plurality of rib formations 16 on an outside surface of the device. The ribs as disclosed in Andrews are on the outside of the device and not on an interior region as claimed. In addition, in Andrews, the ribs 16 do not bridge across the hinge section 34 as shown in Figure 5. For this additional reason, Applicant respectfully submits that dependent claims 10, 20, and 36 distinguish over the cited combination of Koffler and Andrews and are in condition for allowance. Withdrawal of the rejection of dependent claims 10, 20, and 36 is respectfully requested.

Claims 21, 37-38, and 40-41 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Koffler in view of Andrews and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 1,279,855 to Garvey ("Garvey").

Dependent claims 40-41 have been canceled, thus rendering the rejection of claims 40-41 moot. Dependent claims 21 and 37-38 depend from and further restrict independent claim 1 in a patentable sense. Applicant respectfully submits that, for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to the rejection of independent claim 1, dependent claims 21 and 37-38 distinguish over the cited combination of Koffler, Andrews, and Garvey and are in condition for allowance. Withdrawal of the rejection of dependent claims 21 and 37-38 is respectfully requested.

In addition, Applicant respectfully submits that the cited combination of Koffler, Andrews, and Garvey fails to teach, suggest, or obviate at least one of the distinguishing features of independent claim 1 from which claims 21 and 37-38 depend from. More specifically, Koffler discloses a protective mitt adapted to be worn on a user's hand to protect the user's palm, thumb and fingers. Koffler fails to disclose an interior region including a plurality of ribs that bridge across a hinge region and extend generally perpendicularly from the hinge region towards a first end and a second end of a C-shaped body. Andrews discloses a hand-held pincer like device for providing a secure grip upon a fish. The device comprises substantially

identical rigid panels which are hingedly connected to one another to permit facile opening and secure closing, and which have friction-enhancing interior surfaces thereon. Andrews discloses a plurality of rib formations 16 on an outside surface of the device. The ribs as disclosed in Andrews are on the outside of the device and not on an interior region as claimed. In addition, in Andrews, the ribs 16 do not bridge across the hinge section 34 as shown in Figure 5.

Garvey discloses a glove for protecting a user's hand while mopping, scrubbing, and other similar operations. The inner or palm of the glove includes a plurality of ribs or ridges. Garvey further discloses that the ribs on a palm portion of the glove is made short in order so that the ribs do not extend across the portion of the glove at the immediate base of the fingers, namely at the part where the glove would fold when the hand is clenched. The ribs as disclosed in Garvey do not bridge across a hinge region and extend generally perpendicularly from the hinge region towards a first end and a second end of a C-shaped body as claimed. For this additional reason, Applicant respectfully submits that dependent claims 21 and 37-38 distinguish over the cited combination of Koffler, Andrews, and Garvey and are in condition for allowance. Withdrawal of the rejection of dependent claims 21 and 37-38 is respectfully requested.

Claims 22-23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Koffler in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,181,198 to Stelzen ("Stelzen").

Dependent claims 22-23 depend from and further restrict independent claim 1 in a patentable sense. Applicant respectfully submits that, for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to the rejection of independent claim 1, dependent claims 22-23 distinguish over the cited combination of Koffler and Stelzen and are in condition for allowance. Withdrawal of the rejection of dependent claims 22-23 is respectfully requested.

In view of the above amendment, applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

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Respectfully submitted,

By 

Andre M. Szuwalski

Registration No.: 35,701

JENKENS & GILCHRIST, A PROFESSIONAL
CORPORATION

1445 Ross Avenue, Suite 3700

Dallas, Texas 75202

(214) 855-4500

Attorneys For Applicant